



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Resources and Development Committee certifies Manuelito Chapter's Community-Based Land Use Plan



PHOTO: Manuelito Chapter's Community-Based Land Use Plan was unanimously approved and certified by the Resource and Development Committee on Wednesday, Nov. 1.

MANUELITO CHAPTER, N.M. – Last Wednesday, members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council's Resources and Development Committee (RDC) approved Legislation No. 0224-23, certifying Manuelito Chapter's Community-Based Land Use Plan, which outlines many critical local issues and initiatives.

"This is a big step for sustainability and being independent as a chapter," said RDC Chair Brenda Jesus (Oaksprings, St. Michaels). "I commend Manuelito Chapter. This takes a lot of qualitative research. The Master Land Use Plan you put together is spectacular. As RDC, this is what we want for other chapters."

Presenting on behalf of Manuelito Chapter were Chapter President and Master Plan Advisor Milton Davidson, Community Land Use Planning Committee (CLUPC) Chairperson Julia Ellison, and CLUPC member Paulene McCabe.

The Manuelito Chapter Master Land Use Plan is an official public document adopted by the chapter officials. It serves as a policy guide for decisions about the physical development of the community's fundamental, publicly owned elements, from open space to infrastructure, over the next 20 to 30 years.

The plan lays out the chapter's general, long-range approach to making decisions about any new development, infrastructure, or improvement programs.

According to the Plan, the Chapter's short-term goals include: the development of a mapping program; conducting land and archaeological surveys for chapter developments including housing sites, economic development, a site for the community solid waste, and determining private land; applying for a Recycling and Illegal Dumping (RAID) Grant; completing a statement of work to outline the project management for implementing funding; identifying and applying for supplemental funding to continue with master land use plans; implementing all New Mexico capital outlay projects; and relocating chapter staff into the administration building.

The Chapter's long-term goals include: creating an observation site/lookout point at a strategic location; establishing Right of Way for NM-118 with Surrender Canyon as an alternate route; the construction of bridges; prioritizing the seven families needing relocation for housing; creating a vendor's village; and creating a community center.

Chapter President Davidson said that Manuelito Chapter's Master Land Use Plan represents the chapter's needs and is the culmination of years of meetings and chapter participation.

"I've represented my community for 27 years. All the plans are in here. These are our community's needs," he said. "I want to thank all our leaders, Marlene Hoskie, the CLUPC, and the RDC."

Council Delegate Otto Tso, a member of the RDC, congratulated Manuelito Chapter for the certification of their Master Land Use Plan, stating that there are endless possibilities that exist for the chapter such as collecting their own sales taxes.

"This plan lays the ground rules for housing, infrastructure, and economic development. I see this as the community has spoken," Delegate Tso said. "The importance of your community is what you need to continue to build."

RDC member Shawna Ann Claw encouraged the chapter to continue to work with their CLUPC. She said that often when chapters gain independence through the Local Governance Act, they start to bypass their CLUPC.

"All land withdraws should have a resolution from the CLUPC. I don't see this identified in the Plan and that should be the starting point," she said. "I can see that a lot of extensive research went into this plan and that your community was involved. This plan is one of the best that I've seen."

The Resources and Development Committee unanimously approved Legislation No. 0224-23 with a vote of four in favor and zero opposed. The RDC is the final authority for the legislation.

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